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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION LAUNCHES PILOT PROGRAM PRODUCING AND USING BIO-DIESEL FUEL

New effort part of agency's Sustainability Plan

SPRINGFIELD –The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) recently created a pilot program that couples inmate rehabilitation with the department's initiative to go green. In 2007 Menard Correctional Center's Industries program began producing bio-diesel fuel from waste vegetable oil recycled from IDOC facilities around the state. That program has now come full circle with an IDOC transfer bus equipped to run on the bio-diesel fuel.

"The agency is committed to conserving energy, reducing waste and becoming more self-sufficient," said IDOC Director S.A. Godinez. "This multifaceted initiative will help save taxpayer dollars, create offender vocational and job training opportunities and reduce the environmental impact of our operations."

The fuel being used in the IDOC transfer bus is a combination of bio-diesel and regular diesel fuel. To date, the facility has produced nearly 19,000 gallons of bio-diesel that costs only .97 cents a gallon. The facility made biodiesel is also currently being used in multiple tractors, refrigerated trailer units and other vehicles at Menard CC.

The bio-fuel production is part of IDOC's Illinois Correctional Industries vocational training program for inmates. The program provides offenders with useful job skills, increased self-esteem and a good work ethic while preparing them for a successful reentry upon their release.

The Department has also launched a new website which outlines the agency's efforts to implement sustainable practices at facilities statewide. For more information please visit the website at:

<http://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/aboutus/Pages/Sustainability.aspx>

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